



## ***AOT in Action***

Welcome to AOT in Action, your weekly e-newsletter from the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT).

### **A Message from Director Sherry Henry:**

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Good morning,

*"It's the most wonderful time of the year!"*

The holiday season is upon us and if you are expecting friends and loved ones to visit during this time I hope you'll have the opportunity to get out and experience some of Arizona's amazing holiday events.

A few of these great events include Flagstaff's Holiday of Lights Festival, Williams' Polar Express train ride, Wickenburg's Cowboy Christmas, Casa Grande's Christmas on Main Street and Electric Light parade, Phoenix's Zoo Lights and Tumacacori's La Fiesta De Tumacacori. We have such a wonderful variety of events and attractions throughout the state that both residents and visitors will be sure to enjoy.

If you're looking for ideas, please be sure to check out [www.ArizonaGuide.com](http://www.ArizonaGuide.com) for a full calendar of holiday events occurring around the state.

Also, congratulations to the Wigwam Golf Resort and Spa for celebrating its 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary! For eight decades this valuable tourism asset has hosted a vibrant array of visitors and introduced many to the beauty of the Sonoran desert. Be sure to visit [www.wigwamresort.com](http://www.wigwamresort.com) for more information.

Have a great week.

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### **AOT News**

**New Updates to AOT's Research Web site!**

The following items have been updated in the Research and Statistics section of AOT's business-to-business Web site [www.azot.gov](http://www.azot.gov).

- [State Park Visitation October 2009](#)
- [Airport Passenger Volume September 2009](#)
- [National Park Visitation September 2009](#)
- [National Park Visitation August 2009](#)
- [National Park Visitation July 2009](#)
- [Lodging Performance October 2009](#)
- [Lodging Performance October 2009 \(By County\)](#)

For additional information or questions, please contact Melissa Elkins, Research Manager, at 602-364-3716 or via e-mail at [melkins@azot.gov](mailto:melkins@azot.gov).

### **SAVE the DATE: ATU Workshop – “Grant Seeking and Grant Writing for Tourism-Related Projects”**

As the results of a valuable partnership between the Arizona Department of Commerce, Arizona State Parks, and Arizona Office of Tourism, we are proud to present the next Arizona Tourism University complimentary workshop, “Grant Seeking and Grant Writing for Tourism-Related Projects.”

This informative session will uncover the best free and subscription-based grant funding directories for finding critically needed monies to fund your tourism-related projects, in part or full. The trainer, Dr. Bev Browning, author of *Grant Writing for Dummies* and *Perfect Phrases for Writing Grant Proposals*, will lead you through the skills of finding the perfect group of potential funders and show you how to write grant award winning narrative sections. Don't miss the best "how to" session of the year!

Following Dr. Browning's presentation, Eric Vondy from the State Historic Preservation Office, Vivia Strang also from the State Historic Preservation Office, Tom Doyle from the Arizona Department of Commerce, and Glenn Schlottman from the Arizona Office of Tourism will present information on Certified Local Governments, Historic Preservation, the Main Street and REDI Programs, and AOT grant programs. Each presenter will be available at the last part of the workshop to answer questions and discuss projects.

Be sure to sign up today! Contact Glenn Schlottman at 602-364-3727 or via e-mail at [gschlottman@azot.gov](mailto:gschlottman@azot.gov).

“Grant Seeking and Grant Writing for Tourism-Related Projects” complimentary workshops will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the following locations:

#### **December 9**

##### [White Stallion Ranch](#)

9251 W. Twin Peaks Rd.  
Tucson, Arizona 85743

#### **December 11**

[Lowell Observatory](#)

1400 West Mars Hill Road  
Flagstaff, AZ 86001

**December 15**

[Arizona Museum of Natural History](#)

53 N MacDonald  
Mesa, AZ 85201

For more information or to registrar, contact Glenn Schlottman at 602-364-3727 or via e-mail at [gschlottman@azot.gov](mailto:gschlottman@azot.gov).

**AOT Set to Attend AMC Winter Plenary Session**

The Arizona-Mexico Commission Winter Plenary Session will be held December 4 in Hermosillo, Sonora. Arizona co-chairs the tourism committee. Felipe Garcia from the Metropolitan Tucson Convention & Visitors Bureau, and Laura French, AOT's Communications & Community Development Director, will co-chair the meeting. Some of the topics will include: Infrastructure enhancements at the Mariposa and Lukeville Port of Entries and a follow-up of the Tourism committee's bi-national marketing collaboration with the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument and the Pinacate Reserve in Sonoyta, Sonora. For more information, contact Laura French at 602-364-3720 or via e-mail at [lfrench@azot.gov](mailto:lfrench@azot.gov).

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**AOT Activities**

**NTA Annual Convention held in Reno, Nevada**

Jennifer Sutcliffe, AOT's Travel Industry Marketing Manager, attended the National Tour Association's Annual Convention and Marketplace held in Reno, Nevada, November 14-18. The annual event is the largest marketplace for North American packaged travel companies to meet with North American as well as international travel suppliers. Nearly 1,900 people attended this event including 400 operators. Arizona had more than 40 delegates attend.

For many, tours including Arizona are still some of the most popular tours, but suppliers want new ideas and activities to add in their current program. If you have itineraries and unique experiences, especially for groups, submit them to Jennifer Sutcliffe at 602-364-3693 or via e-mail at [jsutcliffe@azot.gov](mailto:jsutcliffe@azot.gov). Check back soon for a full Arizona report of the NTA Convention.

**Brochure Distribution Opportunities in Germany**

Between January and March 2010, AOT's German representative will attend three leading consumer shows which are being coordinated by the Visit USA Germany committee. There are two five-day shows being held in Munich and Hamburg, and one nine-day show in Stuttgart. It is estimated that more than 375,000 consumers will attend the shows, making this an excellent opportunity to reach a very large target audience.

Brochure participation is normally \$250 per show, but all three shows are available for \$500 (plus shipping). Space is limited to five exhibitors on a first come first served basis!

For more information, please contact Loretta Belonio at 602-364-3725 or via e-mail at [lbeldonio@azot.gov](mailto:lbeldonio@azot.gov).

## Upcoming Events & Activities

### International Media Golf Shootout

**Date:** November 30 – December 6

**Location:** Greater Phoenix

### AZAP FAM Tour

**Date:** December 1 – 6

**Location:** Phoenix, Chandler, Prescott, Scottsdale, Tucson, Page/Lake Powell, Lake Havasu City, Mesa, Tempe and Flagstaff

### Calgary Sales Blitz

**Dates:** December 7

**Location:** Calgary, Alberta, Canada

### Winnipeg Sales Mission

**Date:** December 7 – 9

**Location:** Winnipeg, Manitoba

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## Industry News

### **Travel Increase May Be Short-Lived**

Forecasters predict that Thanksgiving travel will be up slightly this year, but the boost may not last long, says the Orlando Sentinel. According to the travelhorizons survey by Orlando-based Ypartnership and the U.S. Travel Association, 53 percent of U.S. adults plan to take at least one overnight leisure trip during the October-through-April period. Last year, the number was slightly higher-56 percent. The decline came despite many clients seeming more optimistic about 2010, said Peter Yesawich, CEO of Ypartnership. "The anecdotal evidence suggests we could see a bit of an increase," he said. The survey, which polled 2,300 households, found that only 18 percent planned to take a business trip during the six-month period. "Demand for travel is still driven by leisure," Yesawich said. "That's the good news for places like Orlando." (*www.Orlando Sentinel.com/Business; Travel Advance, Nov. 23*)

### **CDC Kicks Off Travelers' Health Awareness Campaign**

To help travelers avoid the flu this holiday season, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention launched its largest ever public awareness campaign about staying healthy while traveling. "The holidays are one of the busiest travel times of the year," said Anne Schuchat, M.D., director of the CDC's National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases. "People are in close contact-whether they're on a plane, train, ship or just visiting with loved ones. This campaign provides practical advice to help travelers prepare for their trips and stay healthy during their holiday travel." The CDC is urging people to travel only when they are feeling well; get vaccinated for flu, both seasonal and 2009 H1N1 if they are in a priority group; wash hands

often; and cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or sleeve. ([www.TravelPulse.com](http://www.TravelPulse.com), 11/20; *Travel Advance*, Nov. 23)

### **Grand Canyon to Change Backpacker Permit System**

The Grand Canyon National Park is changing the system for getting backcountry permits. Starting Feb. 1, 2010, the park will consider only written requests for backcountry permits four months in advance of trips.

The requests can be sent in by fax, by mail or hand-delivered, but all requests received each day by 5 p.m. will then be randomly ordered by computer for consideration for permits. The park said on its website that the procedural change means applicants "will no longer be able to walk in and have their requests receive immediate consideration." The old system was perceived as giving locals and those with the means to travel to the park to submit their requests an advantage over those trying to fax requests in.

The earliest you can get a backcountry permit for the canyon is four months in advance of a trip, so under the new system, the first day a request can be submitted in writing for a trip taking place in June would be Feb. 1, according to the park website.

The Arizona Daily Sun reported that one out of every two people who seeks permission to camp most places below the rim is denied because space is limited and there are so many applications. Eventually the park plans to move to an online reservation system. Also, the Park Service is not allowing any more individuals to establish commercial backpacking businesses until the agency sorts out a larger plan for the backcountry. (*Associated Press; USA Today*, Nov. 24)

### **STR Sees No Full Recovery for Hotels Until 2011**

STR Global is projecting the U.S. hotel industry will report increases in all three key metrics in 2011, according to its updated forecast. STR's forecast projects 2011 occupancy to be up 2.4 percent to 56.2 percent, average daily rate to increase 3 percent to \$96.81, and revenue per available room to jump 5.5 percent to \$54.41. "For the first time since 2007, occupancy will improve in 2011," said Mark Lomanno, president of STR. "With that, we think that finally the industry will have the ability to raise room rates, though we think that it will be very mitigated ADR growth, about the 3 percent range. It won't nearly come close to getting back to 2007 levels, but will at least be the beginning stages of improvement." Demand for 2011 also is expected to end the year positive with a 3.2 percent increase. STR's revised forecast expects 2009 occupancy to end down 8.8 percent to 55 percent, ADR to drop 8.9 percent to \$97.30 and revPAR to drop 17 percent to \$53.52. ([www.TravelPulse.com](http://www.TravelPulse.com); *Travel Advance*, Nov. 25)

### **Report Predicts 11% Fall in Occupancy at Western Ski Resorts**

October bookings for lodging at Western ski resorts jumped 25 percent from last year, but reservations for the whole ski season are still lagging, according to the latest numbers from the Mountain Travel Research Program. Ralf Garrison, president of Mountain Travel Research, which tracks lodging reservations at ski resorts in Western North America, said the current data indicate occupancy will be down 11 percent and rates will be down 10 percent. Still, early snow and strong sales of season passes are raising hopes in the industry. ([www.TravelWeekly.com](http://www.TravelWeekly.com), 11/24; *Travel Advance*, Nov. 25)

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## Calendar of Events

Visit [www.ArizonaGuide.com](http://www.ArizonaGuide.com) to find information on all the exciting [events, festivals and activities](#) held throughout the Grand Canyon State!

## Connect with the Arizona Office of Tourism!

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